Kuimonodokoro Akira

★★★ Tomoko Yamashita ★★★

Tsukuru YA Akira

Cocktail LOVE

くいもの処 明楽

AKIRA

ヤマシタトモコ

AFTER HE SAID THAT, ALL I COULD THINK WAS "FUCK! WHAT AM I GONNA DO?!"
IT WAS ALL OVER MY FACE.
THEN HE SAW MY EXPRESSION,
AND IT WAS CLEAR NOW HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO EITHER

DINING BAR AKIRA

ORDER 1

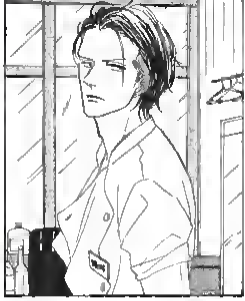
DINING BAR AKIRA
GOT IT.
OKAY. THANKS.
SQUEAK
FIVE CASES OF CHICKEN WINGS WILL DO.
YEAH, WE'RE COMING OUT WITH A NEW MENU.
DINING BAR AKIRA
MAKI-SAN!!
WHUMP
HEY, AKIRA.
YOU'RE LATE.
BEEP
LET'S FIRE TORIHARA!
OUT IT OUT! YOU TRYIN' TO BREAK MY BACK?!
GET OFF IT! STOP YOUR WHINING!

UGK
WHY?
YOU KNOW
BE...BECAUSE HE GETS ON YOUR NERVES?
OR BECAUSE
I LOVE FEELINGS FOR YOU
HEY.
YO.
SCRe
M, MY SENPAI...
AND MY OLD PAL...
CHOKE
CHOKE
CHOKE
CHOKE
BULLSHIT. STOP YOUR BITCHING. WHAT DO YOU TAKE ME FOR?
I'M YOUR BOSS.
SQUA
OW! THAT REALLY HURTS!

.....
HEY!
I'VE GOTTA GET TO PREP-PING!
WHOOSH
IT MAY BE SMALL, BUT EVEN SO BUSINESS HAS BEEN GOOD.
SOON IT'LL BE FIVE YEARS
SINCE I STARTED UP THIS JOINT
COUNTING MYSELF, THERE ARE CURRENTLY EIGHT PEOPLE ON THE STAFF
PART TIMER #4: OKUDA MASARU
PART TIMER #3: GOTO TAKAKO-CHAN
PART-TIMER #2: TORIHARA YASUYUKI
PART TIMER #1: EBIKAWA KOJI
HALL CHIEF: MATSUKI DAI SAN
KITCHEN CHIEF: MITSUMOTO NATSUKI SAN
OWNER: MAKI USUKE-SAN
MANAGER: ME.. AKIRA KOJI
... THAT'S ALL EIGHT OF US.

HUH?
YEAH, LOOKS FINE.
I HAVE FEELINGS FOR YOU
AKIRA-SAN, IS THIS THE RIGHT CONSISTENCY FOR MAYO?
AND THIS IS THE JERK WHO FUCKED UP MY PERFECTLY NORMAL LIFE
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO SAY? I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.
ANSWER WHEN YOUR BOSS IS TALKING TO YOU!
YOU KNOW WHAT I'M TALKIN' ABOUT!
ACK
GRR!
WH...
WHA...?!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?!
WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
SQUEAK
NERVOUS
HERE?
ARE WE REALLY GONNA TALK ABOUT THIS?
.....
SIGH
CLATTER

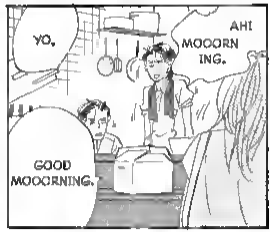
HE'S PISSING ME OFF
.....
YOU GOT A BETTER IDEA? I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE FUCK'S GOIN' ON.



SCRE
KEEP IT DOWN
YOU GUYS.
.....

ACK!
HOW CAN YOU TALK ABOUT JACKING OFF WITH SUCH A STRAIGHT FACE?!
LET ME MAKE IT SIMPLE FOR YOU-- I WANT YOU SO MUCH THAT I COULD JACK OFF TO YOU.
HEY!
HA I AH
CLATTER

SHE HEARD EVERYTHING! SHE CRAWLED OUT A HERE!
SO THEN...
KWAM
CLATTER


YO.
AHI MOOORN ING.
GOOD MOOORNING.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKIN' ABOUT.
TELL ME! COME ON!
HA HA!
WHAT?!
WHAT?! YOU'RE SUCH AN ASSHOLE!
ARE YOU BRINGING THIS UP AGAIN?
QUIET DOWN. WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU'RE ATTRACTED TO ME?
SHOULD I LAUGH WHEN I TALK ABOUT MASTURBATING, THEN?
YOU'RE NOT EVEN GAY. YOU'RE JUST A TYPICAL LADIES' MAN.
CLATTER
WHA...
FLINCH
HA!
UGH... YOU'RE SUCH A PAIN.
.....
DON'T TALK BACK TO YOUR SUPERIOR!
DON'T PLAY WITH MY FEELINGS...
LIKE THAT.

LET ME BE STRAIGHT WITH YOU. YOU PISS ME OFF.
ARE YOU REALLY INCAPABLE OF TAKING THIS SERIOUSLY?! YOU CAN'T DO *ANYTHING* WITHOUT ACTING LIKE IT'S A JOKE?!
TAK
KLIK
HEY, AKIRA!
CAN I FIX THE SHIFTS?
UGH
WHA...?!
AKIRA

YEAH.
SHOW IT TO ME LATER.
GOT IT.
KWHAM
...LOOK. I'M TAKING THIS SERIOUSLY.
I REALLY WISH YOU'D START GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT IT, TOO.
KLAGKT
HA!
DON'T TALK LIKE YOU KNOW EVERYTHING!
WHEN YOU PASS 30, YOU START TO GET DEFENSIVE.
I'D BE FINISHED IF I TOOK A LITTLE KID'S GIBBERISH TO HEART.

SHUT UP. DON'T SAY ANOTHER WORD, PUNK.
SIGH
...I'M HAPPY.
YOU'VE FINALLY STOPPED JOKIN' AROUND.
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M TRYING TO MAKE YOU MAD.
SORRY...

SHASH
HURRY UP AND BRING ALL THE SQUARE PLATES TO THE SINK!
THE BONITO IS UP!
BRING ME A SHOT GLASS!
CLATTER
THAT'S THREE BEERS AND AN OOLONG TEA.
THANK YOU!

KEEPING MY FACE NONCHALANT,

KWAM
BUT THAT'S NOT TRUE AT ALL.
IT SEEMS LIKE A PIECE OF CAKE,
GOING AROUND LIKE NOTHING HAPPENED ..
KREEK KREEK
KWAM
CLICK
HUFF
KLING
...HEY.
YOU'RE EARLY. DON'T SEE THAT OFTEN.

KWAM
.....
SHUT UP, IDIOT.
HUH?
THERE'S ONLY THIS MUCH CABBAGE?
THINK IT'S ENOUGH?
TAK
WE SHOULD...
USE...
...YEAH.
THERE'S STILL SOME LEFT OVER FROM LAST NIGHT.

IS IT THE SAME FOR TORIHARA?
HUH?
IT SEEMS LIKE A PIECE OF CAKE
BUT THAT'S NOT TRUE AT ALL.

EVEN THOUGH HE WEARS A BLANK MASK,
I'M SURE HE'S...
...OH, SO WE SHOULD USE THE LEFTOVERS FIRST.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR DIET?
CAN I GET A CALPIS?
CHECK FOR TABLE THREE.
I JUST FINISHED THE SOUP.
CLATTER

—
NO WAY
HEY EBI-KUN WILL YOU PASS ME THE SOUND DISH?
THMP
TORI, YOU CAN TAKE A BREAK.
GOT IT.
WHAT? HOW CAN YOU BE SO INFANTILE?
IG-NORE
MAKI-SAN! WE REALLY SHOULD FIRE TORIHARA!
HE'S PISSIN' ME OFF!

SNATCH
YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE MUCH OF A NECK TO FIRE.
ALTHOUGH, TORIHARA,
THOOM
DON'T GET TOO TIED UP IN RECKLESS PASSION.
MAYBE SO.
TAP
ARE YOU GIVING ME ADVICE AS MY BOSS, MAKI-SAN?
IT'S...
I'M A BIT OVERPROTECTIVE.
YOU KNOW, AFTER 20 YEARS, HE'S LIKE A LITTLE BROTHER TO ME.

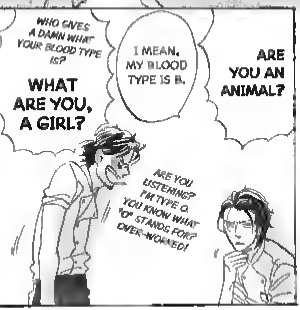
THE "MANAGER" SMILE ♡
APART
WELL. HAVING SAID THAT,
DO BE CAREFUL.
SHOOP
TAK
THAT HURTS.
I WAS ALREADY STRESSING 'CAUSE MY FACE IS SO SCARY-
HAI
AH— DON'T SMILE AT ME.
YOUR FACE GIVES ME THE CREEPS.
MAKI-SAN.
.....

HEY, I'M COUNTING ON YOU, TOO.
.....
IDIOT. YOU SHOULD AT LEAST FAKE A SMILE.

—
FLAP
...26.
THOOM
...HOW OLD DID YOU SAY YOU WERE?

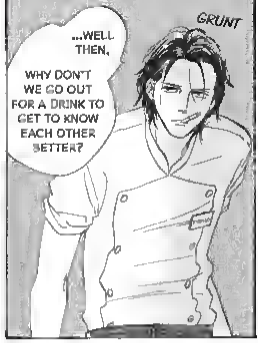
IT'S HARDER THAN
I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE.
AKIRA
I WOULD'VE NEVER THOUGHT SOMEONE THAT YOUNG'D COME ON TO ME
SHHF
HA HA
DAMN, YOU'RE YOUNG.
I'LL THINK IT THROUGH.
BUT YOU KNOW,
I WILL TAKE IT SERIOUSLY.
ACTING LIKE YOU'VE GIVEN UP ON GETTING OUT OF THIS.
YOU'RE THE SNEAKY ONE,

HOW YOU ACT... I CAN'T GET YOUR FACE OUT OF MY HEAD.
!!
PBT
WHAT'S WITH THAT MUG!
YOU LOOK LIKE A HUMAN FOR ONCE.
AKIRA
PBT
Y...
Y, YOU PISS ME OFF!
IT'S...
JUST...


WHO GIVES A DAMN WHAT YOUR BLOOD TYPE IS?
I MEAN, MY BLOOD TYPE IS B.
ARE YOU AN ANIMAL?
WHAT ARE YOU, A GIRL?
ARE YOU LISTENING? I'M TYPE O. YOU KNOW WHAT "O" STANDS FOR? OVER-WORKED!

* NOTE: IN JAPAN BLOOD TYPE IS THOUGHT TO REFLECT A PERSON'S PERSONALITY. SIMILAR TO THE ZODIAC

UH.
ALTHOUGH I'M SORTA PISSED RIGHT NOW.
AND WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU PLAN TO DO ONCE YOU GET ME DRUNK?
HAHA~ YOU LITTLE DIRTY-MINDED PERV


...WELL THEN,
WHY DON'T WE GO OUT FOR A DRINK TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER?
GRUNT

WHA...?

HEY! YOU DON'T GIVE A DAMN AT ALL!
YEAH, YEAH- I LIKE YOU. I LOVE YOU.
HEY!
IF YOU LIKE ME, DON'T GO GETTING PISSED!
HA

...I'M KIDDING.

I DO HAVE FEELINGS FOR YOU.
SO MAYBE I SHOULD GET YOU HAMMERED AND THEN JUMP YOU.
NONCHALANT

OH!
YEAH,
RIGHT!
WHOOSH
SHHF
UM...
GET IT?
HUH?

WHA...?
WAIT A...
SOMETHING LIKE THIS...

!!
THERE'S NO WAY I'D DO THAT...
OUT ON THE STREET.
SHHF
TAP
YOU...
BAS-TARD!
WELL, ANYWAY...
SHFF
SERIOUSLY, FROM NOW ON...
WHOA!
GRR!
KILL YOU!
I'M GONNA

KEEP DREADING IT,
OKAY?
WHRL
.....
SHUT UP..
HE PISSES ME OFF!
DA~D!
COME ON! LET'S FIRE HIM!!

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AKIRA

ヤマシタトモコ

OVERCOMING
THE PAIN IN MY HEAD
I RAN FOR IT

THE THING IS

HE'S FALLING FOR ME
AND THAT MAKES ME FEEL UNEASY
I THINK THAT'S WHY

ORDER 2

DID YOU REMEMBER ALL THE THINGS YOU LEFT BEHIND?
TAPING THAT COOKING SHOW, MY ZIPPO LIGHTER, AND MY T SHIRT...
YOU KNOW, AKIRA SAN.
IT'S MY DAY OFF, AND I HAD TO COME ALL THE WAY HERE JUST FOR YOU
KONK
KONK
KONK
DON'T TALK TO ME LIKE THAT! I'M YOUR BOSS!
.....
AKIRA

AH!
IT'S TORN.
RIGHT THIS.
YOU TOLD ME TO WASH IT.
THE T-SHIRT TOO.
I'LL LOOK FOR THE ZIPPO.
YOUR UNIFORM!
IT'S NOT MY FAULT IF YOU FORGET TO TAKE IT HOME.
BAPP
.....
ANYTHING ELSE YOU FORGOT?
.....
LAST...
NIGHT.

I WORK FOR AN IDIOT.
IDIOT?!
WELL,
IF YOU'VE FORGOTTEN, THAT'S FINE.
.....
HA!
HUH?
SHFF
LATER.
IS YOUR SENSE OF DREAD,
RIGHT?
THE OTHER THING YOU FORGOT
HE SAID THAT 5 DAYS AGO
'KEEP DREADING IT,'

IS THE DISTANCE BETWEEN US DREAD?
--WHAT?
DID HE LEAVE? HE DID. DIDN'T HE?
DID I...
.....
HEY,
YESTERDAY...
LIST OF THINGS I FORGOT
MEMORIES FROM LAST NIGHT AND MY SENSE OF DREAD
TAPING THAT SHOW. MY T SHIRT. UNIFORM, ZIPPO

WHAT WAS IT?
WHAT?
YOU'RE STARING AT ME.
HEY. I'M TALKING TO YOU.
I DON'T KNOW IF THAT'LL DO IT.
BAPP
YOU SHOULD GO TO A CAT HOUSE AND WAKE YOURSELF UP.
GIVE HIM A BREAK.
THE POOR KID.
THE ONLY THING THAT'S IN THE DREAM WORLD RIGHT NOW IS YOU.
...I WAS THINKING THAT WOMEN MUST BE HALF-MADE IN DREAMS...
HUH?
I'M MADE OUT OF FLESH AND BONES.
HUH?

SHUT UP AND GET TO WORK!
I'M GONNA QUIT
THAT'S IT! LET'S GO TO A CAT HOUSE.
PLEASE, DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT! TOUCHING IS IN MEN'S BLOOD!
IDIOT! JUST GO JERK OFF.
I HOPE YOU KILL YOURSELF WHILE GETTING OFF
THAT'S IT! LET'S GO TO A CAT HOUSE.

HIM THINKING LIKE THAT
I CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE
I AM WORKING. I'M THE MANAGER.
KOFF
I WONDER IF HE THINKS ABOUT THAT SORT OF THING
LIKE WANTING TO TOUCH ME

HUH?

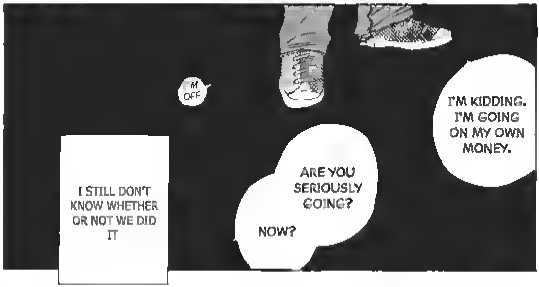
DID I FORGET SOMETHING?

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IT WAS. BUT
WHY DON'T YOU JUST ASK TORIHARA ABOUT IT?
IT'S JUST A QUESTION.
TAPING THAT SHOW, MY UNIFORM ZIPPO MEMORIES FROM LAST NIGHT, MY SENSE OF DREAD.
WHAT ELSE..
OF COURSE IT WOULD. YOU JUST IMPOSED ON HIM.
YOU'RE RIGHT... BUT WOULDN'T THAT BE AWKWARD?
.....
I'M SURE THAT THIS MORNING I
WHY DID I FORGOT MY T-SHIRT?
FALTER
HUH?

WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT?!
PICKED UP THE JACKET LYING THERE.
AH! MY CLOTHES!
HUH? TOMHARA'S PLACE?!
AH! IT'S TOMHARA!
I WAS SURPRISED.
WOKE UP
AND RAN AWAY.
WHAT THE--?! I'M NAKED!
HUH? WHERE'S MY SHIRT?
WHEN I TOOK OFF THE JACKET
I REALIZED IT
SERI-OUS-LY--
YOU'RE GONNA MAKE EVERYONE STARE!
SHUT UP! DON'T SCARE ME LIKE THAT!
AM I REALLY THAT KIND OF GUY?!
WHOA, HE'S PRETTY FLEXIBLE.
ACK--! NO WAY!
NO! NO! NO!!
I'M GONNA GO ON HOME.
I CAN'T WAIT TO BE ALONE.
ARE YOU REALLY ALRIGHT?
AKIRA,
T-SHIRT
SENSE OF DREAD
DID I JUST SEE THOSE TWO POINTS COME TOGETHER!?!

LET HIM HAVE IT, NATSU-CHAN.
MAKI, WHAT ABOUT YOU?
ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A FIGHT?!
GIVE ME SOME MONEY SO I CAN GO TO A CAT HOUSE.
I'M NOT YOUR DADDY

NATSUKI SAN...


I'M KIDDING. I'M GOING ON MY OWN MONEY.
ARE YOU SERIOUSLY GOING?
NOW?
I STILL DON'T KNOW WHETHER OR NOT WE DID IT

BUT I JUST REALIZED THE WORST THING I FORGOT
WHEN THAT IDIOT TORIHARA MUTTERED THAT HE LIKED ME, HIS EYES WERE DEAD SERIOUS
HE PROBABLY REALLY DOES LIKE ME

AAAAHH!!!!!
DING DONG
DING DONG
DING DONG
DING DONG
203
TORIHARA
THAT'S WHY I CAN'T GET HIM OUT OF MY HEAD
I FEEL LIKE I'VE SINNED
I SHOULDN'T HAVE TAKEN GOING OUT FOR A DRINK WITH SOMEONE LIKE THAT SO LIGHTLY
MAYBE
RIGHT?
MAYBE, BEING WITH A WOMAN WILL HELP ME FORGET HIM
GIRLS ARE HALF MADE OF DREAMS, AFTER ALL.
CLAPE
SERIOUSLY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
DID YOU FORGET SOMETHING ELSE?
JUST COME IN ALREADY.
I'LL KILL YOU BEFORE YOU CAN KILL ME!
D, D, DO YOU WANT TO BE KILLED?
IT'S 8 IN THE MORNING!
KWHAM

JUST GET IN HERE!
OF ALL THE THINGS YOU COULD SAY...!
AREN'T YOU BEING TOO COOL?
AKKGH
THWAP
WHAT?
I'M HAVING TROUBLE WITH MY ERECTION.
CREAK
D,
DON'T TAKE OVER PEOPLE'S MINDS!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT!
HAVE YOU GONE TO THE DOCTOR?
HUFF
WHEN I HAVE FANTASIES, IT'S NOT ABOUT THE GIRL STANDING IN FRONT OF ME.
IT'S THINKING OF YOU THAT GETS ME HARD. I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.

HATRED...
RIGHT NOW I HAVE NOTHING BUT HATRED FOR YOU.
AND
TREMBLE TREMBLE
IT CAN'T--
WHAM
TWO HUNDRED BUCKS?
WHAT ABOUT YOUR "SENSE OF DREAD"?
I'M BEGGING YOU!
JUST GIVE THEM BACK! MY TWO HUNDRED BUCKS AND INNER PEACE.

AND YOUR MEMORIES FROM YESTERDAY?
AND THE THINGS I SAID YESTERDAY?
WHAT ABOUT THE MONEY YOU OWE ME FOR CLEANING YOUR UNIFORM? OR GIVING A DAMN ABOUT MY FEELINGS?
DID YOU MANAGE TO LEAVE WITHOUT FORGETTING THOSE, TOO?
SORRY.
I LEFT ALL OF THOSE IN THE TOILET!
UGH!
KWAM
HA!

KWAM
WHAM
WAMM
THUD
---UGK!
HUFF
YOU'RE THE WORST.
YOU REEK OF ALCOHOL..
HOW CAN I...
NOT DRINK?
HUFF

THWAP
IT'S NOT HATRED.
I MEAN, IT CAN'T BE TRUE.
HOW COULD I NOT BE DISGUSTED AFTER KISSING A GUY?
HA-
.....
...SORRY.
IT JUST SLIPPED OUT
THIS REALLY MUST BE HATRED.
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? ALL HIGH AND MIGHTY.
WATCH WHAT YOU SAY TO YOUR SUPERIOR!
WHAT ABOUT PEOPLE'S FEELINGS?
YOU LIKE ME.
WHAT?
TAN
TAN
TAN
DEC-LARA-TION
WELL,
FINE.
WANNA SLEEP OVER?

WHOOSH
HUFF
I'M GOING HOME.
TAK
OUT OF MY WAY
GIVE ME A BREAK, I'M NOT YOUNG ANYMORE.
HMM?
GAP
TAK
HAI
GIVE YOU A BREAK, HUH?
ALRIGHT, THEN.
SQUEAK
KLIK
GOODBYE.
SEE YOU TOMORROW.

WHAT DID YOU SAY TO ME YESTERDAY?
.....
HEY, YOU...
TAK
.....OH
I SAID
"I'M GOING TO KILL YOU."
ME...?
YOU REALLY HAVE NO CLUE ABOUT OTHER PEOPLES' FEELINGS.
WHO ELSE WOULD IT BE?
WHO WAS THE ONE WHO GOT WASTED, THEN WENT OVER TO SOMEONE ELSE'S HOUSE, STRIPPED, AND SLEPT ON HIS BED?
WHAT!?
GOING TO KILL ME?

DO IT BEFORE IT GETS DONE TO ME, YOU HEAR ME?
HMPH!!
...HOW ABOUT IT?
I'M THE TYPE OF GUY WHO FOLLOWS THROUGH.
SCREEE
...WELL, BE CAREFUL.
BECAUSE NEXT TIME I'M GONNA DO IT.
GOT IT?
WANNA TAKE IT WITH YOU?
I FOUND YOUR ZIPPO.
OH.

NO.
I'M GOOD.
I'LL COME BACK FOR IT LATER.
TORIHARA
...ALRIGHT, THEN.
LATER.
KREEK

203
TORIHARA
TAP?
DON'T FORGET ANYTHING
THIS TIME AROUND.
IF YOU DO I'LL GET YOU FOR IT.
I'LL GET YOU BEFORE YOU GET ME.
UWAHA HAHA!
...UM...
SHUT UP.
IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S BEING LOUD!

AAAUGHHH!!!
DINING BAR
NOW THAT I THINK BACK, I FORGOT TO TAPE THAT NEW SHOW--!
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU MANAGED TO THINK BACK AND REMEMBER ANYTHING.
UM,
WHAT ABOUT THE COST OF CLEANING YOUR UNIFORM?
SHUT UP AND GIVE ME BACK BY 2001
.....
I NEVER BORROWED YOUR MONEY

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くいもの処 明楽

AKIRA

ヤマシタトモコ

ORDER 3

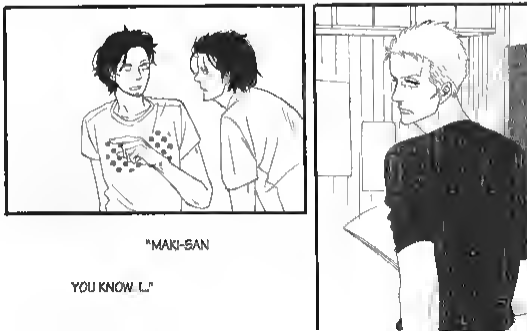
DINING BAR
TEN DAYS AGO - THE DEEP THINKER THAT I AM - I CAME TO THE REALIZATION THAT MY STUPID CHILDHOOD FRIEND AND SUBORDINATE PARTNER IN MANAGING THE RESTAURANT WHOM I HAD ALWAYS TREATED AS MY YOUNGER BROTHER - HAD BEEN TRICKED BY OUR STUPID PART-TIME EMPLOYEE OF FOUR YEARS INTO BEING A STUPID HOMO
MAKI-SAN,
WILL YOU CHECK OVER THE LIST OF ORDERS?
THE STUPID PART-TIMER: TORIHARA
YOU KNOW, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO GOES OUT OF HIS TO USE MY NAME. WHEN EVERYBODY ELSE CALLS ME "BOSS."
WHAT?
...BOSS SAN.
.....
...MAYBE...
...JUST CALL ME BOSS?
HUH
SIGH

I WOULD'VE BEEN ABLE TO BE STRICTER WITH YOU.
...OR YOU HAD A BAD ATTITUDE, OR IF YOU WERE UGLY.
...IF YOU WERE A TOTAL IDIOT...
—
QUICK ANSWER
YEAH.
...IS THAT RIGHT?
SO AM I...
OF COURSE.
MAYBE HE REALLY DOES HAVE A BAD ATTITUDE...
.....
YOU'RE SMART, RIGHT?
.....
TORIHARA'S ALSO REALLY QUICK AT READING PEOPLE.

AHA HA HA!
MAKI-SAN.
AH-- HELLO, EVERYONE! HOW'S EVERYONE DOING? I'M HAVING THE MOST WONDERFUL DAY! I WON 700 DOLLARS AT PACHINKO!
WHAM!!
CONGRATULATE MEI!
THE STUPID YOUNGER BROTHER FIGURE (JAPANESE IDIOTS REPRESENTATIVE 8P) AKIRA-KUN
LIKE, THE KIND OF GUY WHO LETS YOU DO WHATEVER YOU WANT, AS LONG AS YOU'RE HEALTHY?
OH.
...
HEY I SAID CONGRATULATE ME.
.....
I FEEL LIKE THE FATHER OF A DELINQUENT
...
... . .
HUH?
WHAT'S WITH THIS HEAVY ATMOSPHERE?
YOU DOIN' ALRIGHT?
IT'S LIKE...
.. ..
THAT HURT S!
FRANK
SHAKE SHAKE
THAT HURT S!
GOOD GOOD
NAUGHTY
CON GRATU-LATE ME!
IS THAT SO?
TENSION

YEAH. NOW GET TO WORK
THUMP
IDIOTS?
...YEAH.
WELL,
THERE'S NO WAY WE WOULD'VE MANAGED TO SET UP SHOP WITH ALL THESE IDIOTS IF THE FOUR OF US WEREN'T CHILDHOOD FRIENDS TO BEGIN WITH.
YOU KNOW?
MAKI-SAN AND AKIRA-SAN,
I'M AMAZED AT HOW WELL THE TWO OF YOU GET ALONG TOGETHER.
YOU WERE CHILDHOOD FRIENDS, RIGHT?

CHILDHOOD FRIENDS
THE ONLY YOUNGER ONE.
IDIOTS
WHO'S CLOSEST?
IS IT THE TWO OF THEM IN THEIR HOMOSEXUAL RELATIONSHIP?
YOU KEEP CALLING ME BOSS SAN AND MANAGER-SAN ON PURPOSE, DON'T YOU?


"MAKI-SAN
YOU KNOW I..."

TOTTER
HE SAID THAT 17 YEARS AGO...
I'D THOUGHT HE'D GROW UP A BIT SINCE THEN.
SIIIIGH
THIS IS WHAT YOU END UP WITH WHEN YOU'LL DO ANYTHING, AS LONG AS YOU DON'T REGRET
OH, OKAY
FLASHBACK
FLINCH
"MAKI-SAN I'LL NEVER DO ANYTHING TO YOU THAT I'LL REGRET"

CAN I PUT THIS IN THE BACK?
YEAH.

CLACK
WE ARE CLOSED
THANK YOU! TAKE CARE!

TAK
NO.
EVERYBODY'S ALREADY GONE HOME.
ZAP
I'LL BE DONE SOON...
CLACK
ALRIGHT THEN.
WAIT FOR ME.
I'M GONNA GET CHANGED
YOU CAN GO ON AHEAD...
WHAT'RE YOU DOING? WE CAN DEAL WITH THAT TOMORROW.

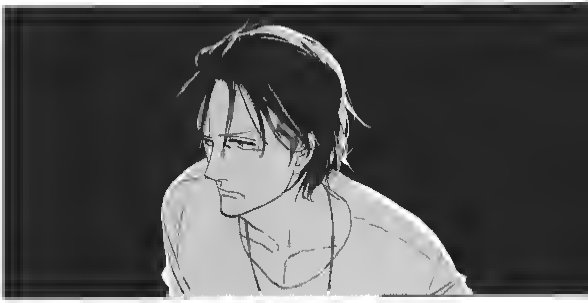
DOES MAKI-SAN...
HURRY UP AND FINISH.
HA-H
CLATTER
HAPPY

NOT AT ALL
HUH?
NO, IT'S JUST THAT SOMETIMES HE'S SORTA SCARY.
WHY?
I MEAN, IT'S PROBABLY JUST BECAUSE I'M HITTING ON YOU, BUT...
HATE GUYS LIKE ME?
YEAH?
KACHI

UH... MAYBE... I MEAN, YEAH, DEFINITELY...
HE'S PROBABLY FIGURED IT OUT.
CLANG
DOES MAKI-SAN KNOW? ABOUT US...
YOU KNOW...
HOW SHOULD I PUT IT...
I MEAN, NOT ONLY AM I AN ADULT I'M ALREADY 31 YEARS OVER 30.
THAT'S NOT IT. I AM AN ADULT AND...
CLICK
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.
YOU DON'T WANT YOUR FAMILY TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR SEX LIFE.
IT'S ONLY NATURAL
MAKI-SAN'S LIKE MY DAD.
TRAK
THAT SUCKS?
IT SUCKS THAT THAT'S YOUR REACTION.
...DO YOU REGRET IT?
AUGH! THAT SUCKS!
THUD
...AKIRA-SAN.
TAC
I STILL HAVEN'T EVEN MADE UP MY MIND ABOUT THAT YET. IT'S TOO SOON.
NOW, WAIT JUST A MOMENT.
WHAT SEX? WHEN WE'VE NEVER DONE IT...
ZAP
STRESSED
FISH
THERE'S NO WAY I COULD KEEP UP WITH YOUR YOUTHFUL SEXUAL APPETITE.

DO YOU REALLY HAVE FEELINGS FOR ME?
STRESSED
WHAT...?
CLANG
GET A GRIP!
I LIKE YOU! I REALLY DO!
QUICK RESPONSE
WHIRL
MY DREAM IS TO RUN A CONVENTION FOR BIG BREASTS, AND I'M GOING OUT WITH YOU A GUY.
DO YOU REALIZE HOW MUCH I LIKE WOMEN WHEN YOU SAY THAT
WH WH- WHAT DO YOU THINK? ASSHOLE.
...SORRY.
I GUESS,
I'M JUST NERVOUS.

I'M BEING SO OPEN RIGHT NOW I FEEL LIKE I'M IN A ROMANCE MOVIE
DON'T BLUSH, YOU IDIOT!
HA HA HA
.....
OH...
I...
SEE....
.....
WHY ELSE WOULD I GO OUT WITH A GUY?



DINING BAR AKIRA

WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
WE'RE CLOSED TODAY.
CREAK
...OH
I JUST THOUGHT IF I CAME IN WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO TALK...
...
A LITTLE.
CREAK
MIRACULOUSLY I'M 20/1
...ABOUT ME
OR WHAT'S GOING ON.
YOU KNOW--
HAHA
I'M JUST WORRIED.
OR, MAYBE IT'S JUST--
HEY...
THUMP
WHAT?
HUH? WERE YOUR BANGS ALWAYS SO LONG?
IT'S SO EMO.
...YEAH.
I WAS JUST THINKING THAT YOU'VE SEEMED A LITTLE MAD RECENTLY.
THOSE BANGS ARE GONNA HURT YOUR EYESIGHT
ABOUT WHAT?

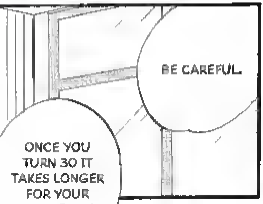
...THAT MADE YOU FEEL THAT WAY ABOUT HIM?
KATAK
WHAT WAS IT...
ARMA-SAN
BRRR
I WAS FILLED WITH JEALOUSY, WATCHING HIM LIKE THAT.
OR MAYBE IT'S THE WAY HE CAN LAUGH ANYTHING OFF.
YOU MAKE ME LOOK AWESOME
.....
MAYBE IT'S THE LIGHT HEARTED WAY HE GOES AROUND DOING THINGS I COULD NEVER DO, LIKE THEY'RE SO SIMPLE.
BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WANTED HIM SO BADLY...
...THAT STUPID SIDE OF HIM...

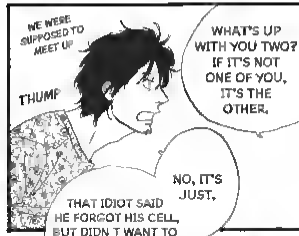
YOU KNOW, YOU REALLY SHOULD CUT YOUR BANGS.
WELL, I'LL GET YOU OUT OF THIS MESS.
I THINK TOO MUCH.
DON'T IF
HA HA HA
YOU'RE AN IDIOT.
WHERE'D THAT COME FROM? LET'S GET BACK TO...
WHAT?!
WHY DON'T YOU JUST LISTEN TO WHAT YOUR BIG BROTHER TELLS YOU?
YOU KNOW, I...
...I'M SORT OF WORRIED, TOO.
ABOUT YOU, THAT IS.

.....
ALRIGHT... I'LL GET MY BANGS CUT...
YOU DO THAT.
IT'LL MAKE YOU MORE ATTRACTIVE.
...IF DADDY SAYS SO.
I DON'T NEED TWO GROWN-UP MEN CALLING ME DADDY
I SAID I'D GIVE YOU A CALL ONCE I GOT CLOSE
HEY!
YOU!
ANSWER YOUR DAMN CELL!
THE RUMORED IDIOT
SQUEAK
TAK
.....
GRUMBLE GRUMBLE
AUGH!
MY CELL...
PHONE.

CREAK

?
I FORGOT IT IN THE STORE...
.....
AUGH...


BE CAREFUL.


WE WERE SUPPOSED TO MEET UP
THUMP
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU TWO? IF IT'S NOT ONE OF YOU, IT'S THE OTHER.
NO, IT'S JUST.
THAT IDIOT SAID HE FORGOT HIS CELL, BUT DIDN'T WANT TO COME BACK IN TO GET IT 'CAUSE IT'D BE AWKWARD.

ONCE YOU TURN 30 IT TAKES LONGER FOR YOUR WOUNDS TO HEAL.
...SO DON'T GET YOURSELF HURT.
YOU HEAR ME?

DROP
OH THIS?
.....

SHUT UP

AKIRA...

EVEN IF I DO GET HURT, THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
HA HA HA
HURRY UP AND GO HOME. YOU'RE IN MY WAY
SHOO
SHOO
TA---DA!
I'M 100% GOOD TO GO.

THE NEXT DAY...
WORDS OF AFFECTION ARE ALWAYS TWISTED WHEN MAKI-SAN SAYS THEM.
.....
HA HA
WHAT?! YOU ACTUALLY CUT IT?!
THE KIND OF GUY WHO ALWAYS FOLLOWS THROUGH.
DON'T SWEAT IT. IT'S HIS WAY OF SHOWING HE LOVES YOU
SMILE
IT'S CUTE.
IT LOOKS GOOD ON YOU
WHOA, YOU'RE A GOODY TWO-SHOES, AREN'T YOU.

Kuimonodokoro Akira

★★★ Tomoko Yamashita ★★★

Tsukuru YA Akira

Cocktail LOVE

くいもの処 明楽

AKIRA

ヤマシタトモコ

ORDER 4

FLUTTER
I SEE HIM FOUR TIMES A WEEK AT WORK.
ON TWO OF THOSE WE GO OUT TO DINNER.
"HOW 'BOUT YOU STAY THE NIGHT?"
"---I'M GOIN' HOME."
SINCE THAT NIGHT...

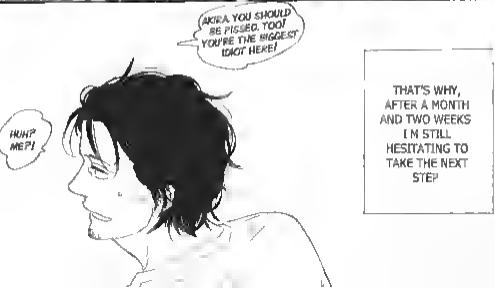
...IT'S BEEN A MONTH AND TWO WEEKS...
...AND WE'VE DONE NOTHING MORE THAN A BIT OF MAKING OUT
"DO YOU REALLY HAVE FEELINGS FOR ME?"
I CAN'T DECIDE WHAT THE NEXT STEP IS
IT'S DRIVIN' ME CRAZY

AM I SCARED?
THIS IS PISSIN' ME OFF...
TOOK ANOTHER GIRL TO ASKIN' HIM FOR DIRECTIONS
HMPH
JEALOUS
I HEAR THAT EVER SINCE TORIHARA KUN CUT HIS BANGS, HE'S BEEN REAL POPULAR WITH THE LADIES...
HE SEEMS MORE APPROACHABLE.
TAK
AKIRA SAN.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING ON ABOUT THIS TIME?
HERE I AM, 32, JUST PRAYIN' GIRLS WOULD COME AFTER ME.
I'M SO JEALOUS-
KYAHAHA
CRACK

.....
...SO, WHAT'S YOUR TYPE?
NICE.
HE'S PISSED OFF.
I GUESS IT'S ONLY NATURAL.
AH...
WHAT SHOULD I EAT IF I WANNA BE ATTRACTIVE LIKE YOU?
YOU KNOW THE TRUTH IS.
I WISH I WAS ATTRACTIVE.
WHAT?
I KNOW THAT HE LIKES ME.
AS FOR ME, I'D NEVER GO OUT WITH A GUY I WASN'T FALLIN HEAD OVER HEELS FOR
HUH?
TYPE?
UHHH...
AH!
BUT, EVEN SO, BEING TOGETHER LIKE THAT JUST—

...MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I WON'T BE ABLE TO TURN BACK,
AND THAT SCARES ME.
FLINCH
ALRIGHT, SO WHAT ABOUT YOU, TORIHA-UN-KUN?
WHAT'S YOUR TYPE?!
ME?
UH..
...OH, ALRIGHT...
THE CHEERY AND EROTIC TYPE!
NOT THE LEAST BIT CHEERY...
HA HA HA
THAT'S SO LIKE YOU, AKIRA

HA HA HA
WE MUST BE IDIOTS.
HE SAW OUR FACES AND APOLOGIZED!
ACK
THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS
SOMEONE WITH BRAINS.
SORRY.
OH.
I MUST'VE..
UH
IDIOT
IDIOT
IDIOT


AKIRA, YOU SHOULD BE PISSED, TOO! YOU'RE THE BIGGEST IDIOT HERE!
HUH? ME?!
THAT'S WHY, AFTER A MONTH AND TWO WEEKS I'M STILL HESITATING TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP

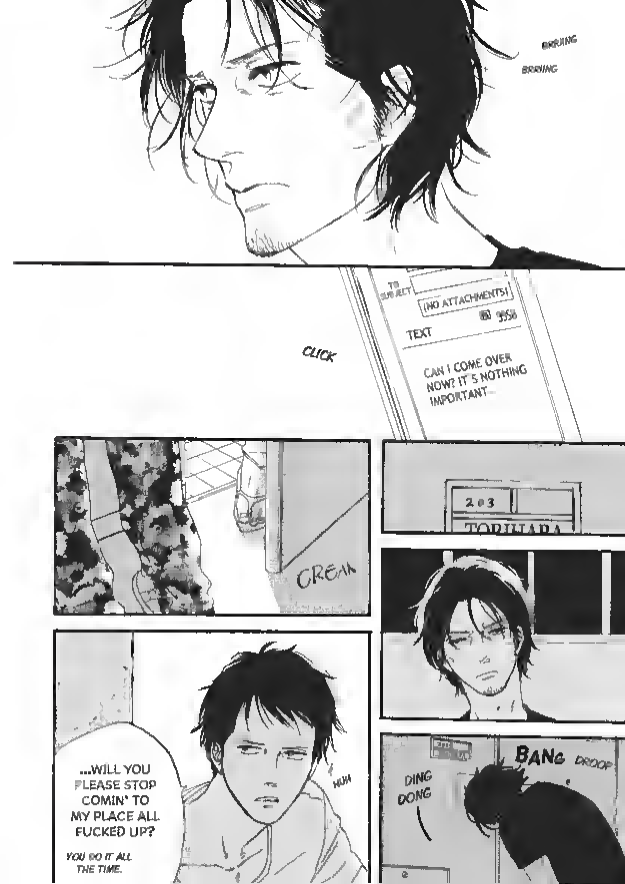
SHHF
HEY!
GOOD WORK TODAY! YOU GOIN' HOME?
CLANG
.....
AKIRA-SAN,
THMP
SOLEEK
I MANAGED TO FINISH CHECKING EVERYTHING EARLIER THAN USUAL.
I CAN STAY IF THERE'S ANYTHING ELSE YOU NEED ME TO DO.
THMP
AH.
NO, IT'S FINE.
YOU SHOULD GO HOME EARLY EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.
YOU WORK TOO MUCH.

I FEEL LIKE THERE ARE WAY TOO MANY THINGS I SHOULD BE KEEPING TRACK OF.
...UM...
WHEN WAS THIS?
...YOU KNOW...
OH!
YOU MEAN WHETHER OR NOT WE'RE GONNA DO IT? THAT AGAIN?
IS THAT IT?
YIKES
YOU GIVEN ANY SERIOUS THOUGHT TO WHAT I SAID EARLIER?
YOU REALLY THINK THERE'S A GUY IN THIS ENTIRE WORLD WHO IT ISN'T IMPORTANT TO?
IS WHETHER OR NOT WE DO IT REALLY THAT IMPORTANT TO YOU?
...UH...
NO...
OH, HEY...
THERE ISN'T... IS THERE?

I WANT PHYSICAL PROOF OF OUR RELATIONSHIP.
NO MATTER WHAT YOU SAY, IT'S JUST WORDS, AND THAT MAKES ME NERVOUS.
...I MEAN, I KNOW YOU'RE NOT THE TYPE TO GO AROUND LYING...
...I'M NOT LYING. I REALLY DO HAVE FEELINGS FOR YOU.
...BUT...
...THAT'S SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY...
.....
...BUT I NEED TO KNOW YOU'RE NOT DATING ME OUT OF SYMPATHY.
THAT THIS ISN'T A FANTASY.
(CLACK)
YOU'RE SO...
HEY! ... NEGATIVE!!
HA HA.
IT'S A BAD HABIT.

RIGHT NOW I'M STILL AT A POINT WHERE I COULD GO BACK BUT I'M AT A FORK IN THE ROAD AND I'M BEING FORCED TO CHOOSE

NO.
CLICK
...MAYBE IF I WAS 5 YEARS YOUNGER...
IT'D BE EASIER?
BEEP BEEP
AT 27, I DON'T THINK I WOULD'VE EVER CHOSEN HIM
REDIAL.
TORIHARA
CALL
THMP
MY HEART IS THE ONLY THING LEFT THAT CAN TAKE A BEATING
THERE'S NO STRENGTH LEFT TO TURN BACK IF I GO DOWN THE PATH OF NO RETURN.
...ONCE I TURNED 30...
IT FELT LIKE THE NUMBER OF CHOICES FOR HOW I CAN LIVE MY LIFE SUDDENLY THINNED OUT
CLACK


BUZZING
BUZZING
TO
SUBJECT
(NO ATTACHMENTS)
TEXT
CLICK
CAN I COME OVER NOW? IT'S NOTHING IMPORTANT
CREAK
203
TORIUMA
...WILL YOU PLEASE STOP COMIN' TO MY PLACE ALL FUCKED UP?
YOU DO IT ALL THE TIME.
HUH
DING DONG
BANG
DROOP

.....
MR. IGNORAMUS.
WELL, GET IT TOGETHER.
.....
I BANGED MY HEAD AGAINST THE WALL, AND I COMPLETELY FORGOT WHAT I WAS GOING TO SAY.
HA.
....
I'M NOT AS YOUNG AS YOU THINK I AM.
SHHF
I'M NOT LIKE YOU.
I'M FINE WITH LYING.
SHHP

'CAUSE I'M AN ADULT.
.....
WHY IS THAT?
.....
WELL, I WAS JUST STOPPING BY.
—UGK
I'M GOING NOW. SORRY
GRIP
SHHF

SO THEN.
WHAT DID YOU COME HERE *TO DO*?
TO "MAKE ME ANGRY"?
AND?
...JUST...
...TO SEE YOU...
...BUT THEN I THOUGHT...
...I CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING BEYOND THAT...
...I'D PICK UP THE ZIPPO I FORGOT...

THUMP
UH!
WHOA!
HW
OOSH
OUCH!
KUMP
SHIF
THUNK
TH-
THUMP
WH—
OA!
KUNK

TAK
I'M GONNA KILL YOU!
...HURTS! YOU ASSHOLE!
GLARE
THAT...
THWAP
YOU SAID I MADE YOU HARD.
THE LAST TIME I PINNED YOU DOWN,
YOU WEREN'T LYING,
RIGHT?

I DON'T WANNA LEARN ANYTHIN' NEW AT THIS STAGE.
I'M AT THE AGE WHERE I CAN'T JUST TURN BACK.
DO YOU GET IT, PUNK?
FLINCH
THINKIN' PAST THAT POINT IS SCARY.
--IT--
HAHL
...AH!
...HOW YOU WOULD...
...LIKE...IF IT WAS YOU...
FLINCH
...NOTHIN' SPECIAL.
SO WHAT WERE YOU THINKIN' ABOUT THAT MADE YOU HARD?
YOU KNOW...
JUST THINKIN' ABOUT YOU IN GENERAL.

GRIP
...DO IT.
...I CAN'T...
S-
STOP! I REALLY...
CLATTER
I'M FUCKIN' SCARED.
THE ROAD SIGN FOR THE PATH OF NO RETURN...
—WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?
AKIRA SAN,
YOU KNOW, I...

I'M RIGHT ABOUT YOU, AREN'T I?
YOU'RE NO WOMAN, SO I FIGURE THERE'S NO NEED TO GO GENTLE ON YOU.
YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO MAKE ME ANGRY.
IT'S LIKE...
...YOU'RE TRYIN' TO GET ME TO FLIP SO I'LL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR STARTIN' THIS, AND YOU CAN BLAME IT ALL ON ME.
THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE DOIN'.

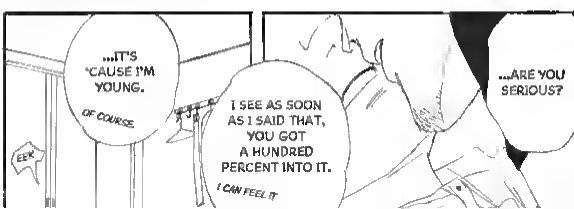
HEY, NOW...
I'M NOT THE ONE YOU'RE LYIN' TO, AM I?
YOU'RE ACTIN' LIKE YOU DON'T REALIZE WHAT YOU'RE DOIN'. YOU KEEP FOOLIN' YOURSELF.
'CAUSE YOU'RE AN "ADULT"?
.....!
PRT
...IS THIS WHAT YOU THOUGHT WOULD GET ME ANGRY?
THE WAY YOU GO ABOUT THIS, YOU'RE SO NAÏVE.
HAVE YOU DECIDED TO SHOW YOUR TRUE COLORS YET?
...YOU...!

BUT I WAS WRONG.
IS THE ROAD SIGN...
...YOU KNOW, WHEN I FIRST STARTED HAVIN' FEELINGS FOR YOU...
...I DIDN'T THINK THINGS WOULD BE SIMPLE, EITHER.
TRUTH IS, IT'S AS SIMPLE AS A FOOL.
I MEAN, YOU LIKE ME, DON'T YOU?
IS IT THOSE THREE WORDS
"I LIKE YOU"?
IS EVERYTHING ELSE JUST SOMETHING TO BE DEALT WITH LATER?
SHOULD I DEAL WITH THE FUTURE WHEN I GET TO

KTHUNK
THUD
AH!
WHOA
?!
YOU FUCKING PUNK!!
KUMP
AN EYE FOR AN EYE!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO KICKED ME EARLIER!!
AAAHH-- WHAT THE FUCK IS UP WITH YOU ALL OF A SUDDEN?!
T-THAT HURTS—

SHUT UP, YOU IDIOT! SINCE I'M OLDER THAN YOU THERE'S A LOT I'M GIVING UP FOR YOU RIGHT NOW! SO STOP WHINING AND DEAL!
-WHA?
I DIDN'T KICK YOU HARD!
WHAT'S WITH THIS GANGSTER LOGIC?!
GOOD IN FIGHTS
YOUR PUNCHES ARE WAY TOO FIERCE.

BE GRATEFUL.
YOU HEAR ME, TORIHARA? I'M SAYIN' I'M LETTING YOU DO IT TO ME, PUNK.
I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING FOR IT, 'CAUSE I DO HAVE FEELINGS FOR YOU.


...IT'S 'CAUSE I'M YOUNG.
OF COURSE.
EEK
I SEE AS SOON AS I SAID THAT, YOU GOT A HUNDRED PERCENT INTO IT.
I CAN FEEL IT
...ARE YOU SERIOUS?

HOOF
THIS IS THE WORST...
TO THINK I LET MYSELF... TO A YOUNG PUNK AT THAT...
MNNN...
...AH...
GIVE UP ON IT ALREADY.
I LIKE YOU.

YOU RE PUTTING ME IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION. STOP MAKING THOSE CUTE FACES. DON'T TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE FACT THAT YOU RE YOUNGER THAN ME
THEY'VE TOTALLY GOT ME.
PANT
NEE
HAAH
WAHH!!
HEY!
WHAT ARE YOU? A MONKEY?!
SHUT UP!
I CAN'T!
THWAP
TH—
THAT'S ENOUGH! ENOUGH!
HAFF

GRIN
...WELL, I'M NOT GONNA BE SOFT ON YOU.
BUT I WON'T BE VIOLENT EITHER. SO FORGIVE ME. ALRIGHT?
AH. SORRY ABOUT THAT. I DIDN'T MEAN TO...
YOU WERE JUST FREAKING OUT
HUH?
YOU'RE GONNA TELL ME TO SHUT UP?!
HEY! ARE YOU ASKIN' FOR ANOTHER ONE? YOU WANT ME TO HIT YOU?
CLAK
FLINCH
FLINCH
...COULD YOU PLEASE SHUT UP?
THIS...
...JUST DOESN'T FEEL...
...RIGHT!
CLAK
.....
THAT'S NOT IT. YOU'RE...
WHAT IS IT THEN?
I'M SIMPLY WORRIED THAT I MIGHT WEAR MYSELF OUT AND BE UNABLE TO WORK TOMORROW, SEEING AS I'M AN OLD MAN.
.....
THAT'S WHAT I'M WORRIED ABOUT
I'M ALSO WORRIED ABOUT MY BACK.
SELFISH
AT LEAST SAY THAT IN A CONVINCING TONE!
THUD
COME ON!
!!

LEAVE TOMORROW'S WORRIES FOR TOMORROW,
ALRIGHT?
FLINCH
...NOTHING!
SQUISH
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU? YOU SLY BASTARD...
AOK!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!
WHISH

AHHH...
HAA
THE WAY YOU'RE TOUCHING ME...IT'S SO PERVERTED ...
...YOU...
SAPP
HAAH
I DON'T HAVE BREASTS OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT
DO YOU REALLY PLAN ON TALKING THROUGH THE WHOLE THING?
...I AM BEING PERVERTED.
WE'RE HAVING SEX, AFTER ALL
CLATTER
LIKE HAND CREAM OR SOMETHING...
...WHAT DO YOU DO WITH IT?
FLIP
I TAKE IT LIKE THIS...
SHWOP
UHK!!
HUH? ARE YOU GONNA IGNORE ME?
WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO?
HEY...WHAT ABOUT THAT...
HAA
WHEN YOU DO SOMETHING LIKE PUT IT IN, DON'T YOU NEED SOMETHING LIKE... LOTION?
HE'S GONNA IGNORE ME.
...YEAH...

WAI...
...TI!
CLANK
F
LI
NG
H
I CAN'T!
WA-
IT!
GYACK!
SHWOP
I CAN'T!
CAN'T!
CAN'T!
CAN'T!
TA-TAKE
IT OUT!
IDIOT!!
GASP

WHOA. THAT FELT KILLER JUST NOW.
WHEW
CAN I PUT IT IN JUST A BIT MORE?
WHUP
THAT'S WHY I'M SAYING TAKE IT OUT, YOU FUCKING PUNK!
WHY?
YOU'RE FEELIN' IT, AREN'T YOU?
AUGH DAMN IT! I FEEL WRONGED.
...WILL YOU PLEASE QUIET DOWN?
IT'S ABOUT TIME WE...
BEACK
HEY, YOU...
I'M STARTING TO GET ANNOYED.
GETTING ANNOYED?
...HEY! YOU WANNA BE A LITTLE MORE SERIOUS. ABOUT IT?!
YOU'RE JUST TAKING IT AS A JOKE, AREN'T YOU?
WHUMP
WHY DON'T WE LEAVE THAT FOR NEXT...
W-
WHOA!
IN-
PLEASE KEEP IT DOWN, ALRIGHT?
'CAUSE I'M REALLY GONNA DO IT NOW.
IT'S OK, RIGHT?

AAHH
IN THE END, I'VE GONE DOWN...
...THE PATH OF NO RETURN.
.....
SHUT UP...

...WHEN I WOKE UP IN THE MORNING...
...I COULDN'T BELIEVE THE SIZE OF THE BRUISE...
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID TO GIVE IT EVERYTHING I HAD!
HA HA HA
WELL, AREN'T YOU THE ENERGETIC ONE...?
SEEMS I HAD MORE STRENGTH IN ME THAN I THOUGHT

Kuimonodokoro Akira

★★★ Tomoko Yamashita ★★★

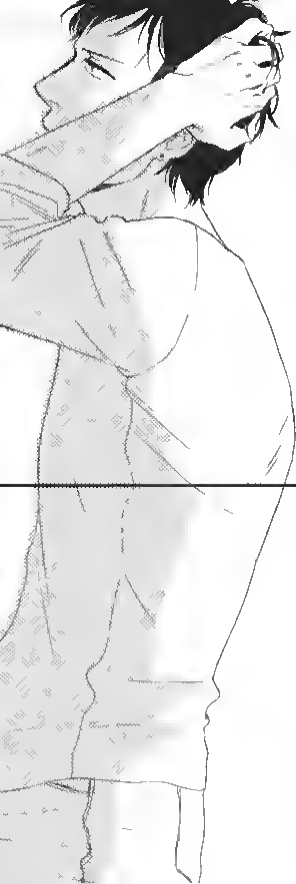
Tsukuru YA Akira

Cocktail LOVE

くいもの処 明楽

AKIRA

ヤマシタトモコ

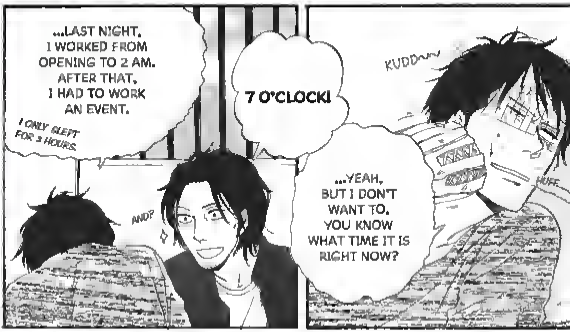

IN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS, WE CONFESSED OUR FEELINGS, DATED, AND HAD SEX
AND THEN ANOTHER THREE MONTHS PASSED
I FEEL A BIT LOST NOW
I MAY NOT LOOK IT, BUT I'M A BALL OF NERVES WITH AN INFERIORITY COMPLEX
YOU PROBABLY HAVEN'T NOTICED BUT ALL THE SAME I

7AM BASEBALL

DINING BAR AKIRA　LAST ORDER

LET'S PLAY BASEBALL!
HERE, YOUR GLOVE!
201
TORIHARA
I PREFER SOCCER.
SWOON

I'M ASKIN' WHETHER OR NOT YOU'VE PLAYED IT BEFORE.
CHUK CHUK
KHAKK
NO, I WAS IN JUDO.
YOU'VE PLAYED THIS BEFORE, RIGHT? FIELD BASEBALL?
WE'RE IN A TIGHT ONE 'CAUSE SOMEONE BAILED.


...LAST NIGHT, I WORKED FROM OPENING TO 2 AM. AFTER THAT, I HAD TO WORK AN EVENT.
I ONLY SLEPT FOR 3 HOURS.
AND?
7 O'CLOCK!
KUDDAAN
...YEAH, BUT I DON'T WANT TO. YOU KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS RIGHT NOW?
HUFF

DAMN IT, YOU'RE DRIVING ME NUTS.
OH, REALLY?! DID YOU PLAY A GIG? YOU MUST BE EXHAUSTED. HOW 'BOUT YOU JUST IMAGINE THE BAT IS A GUITAR.

IF LOOKS ALONE COULD KILL, I'D PROBABLY BE DEAD RIGHT NOW.
YOUR THIRD EYE IS ABOUT TO ZAP ME TO MY DOOM.
KHUKK
IF YOU REALLY LOVE ME,
BE MY PINCH HITTER, LOVER!!
.....
I SAID I WAS SORRY SHEESH

I FEEL
A BIT LOST

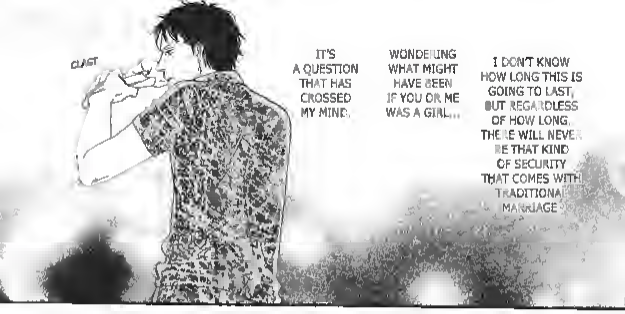
THAT'S
WHERE I AM

* IN HINDUISM, THE OPENING OF THE GOD SHIVA'S THIRD EYE EVENTUALLY DESTROYS THE UNIVERSE

I'VE TURNED BEING NEGATIVE INTO AN ART FORM.
I'M SCARED CAUSE I FEEL LIKE ONE DAY OUR RELATIONSHIP WILL JUST NATURALLY CEASE TO EXIST
IT'S JUST THAT OUR DAYS SLIP BY TOO PEACEFULLY
..."DATE"?
TAK
I'M SURE THIS ISN'T THE SAME AS HAVING A RELATIONSHIP IN A RUT...
RUSTLE
TODAY, WE'RE GOING TO EXPLORE NEW DATING ACTIVITIES THAT CAN RESCUE YOUR RELATIONSHIP FROM THE DEPTHS OF A BORING RUT!!!
FWOOP

"DATE."
MOVE IT-
WE'RE MAKING
THEM WAIT-
WHAT DOES
THAT MEAN?
I FEEL
A BIT LOST
CLONG

SIGH
OR MAYBE...
I FEEL ANXIOUS WITHOUT ANY CLEAR REASON.
WHAT ABOUT YOU, AKIRA? HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT IT?
YOU KNOW GETTING MARRIED.
YEAH... MAYBE TWICE...
I BROKE UP WITH THEM BOTH TIMES THOUGH
WELL, NO ONE KNOWS WHAT LIFE WILL BRING NEXT.
YOU KNOW HOW NATSUKI-SAN'S THE ONLY ONE WORKING HERE WHO IS MARRIED?
I WANNA GET MARRIED TOO, BUT I CAN'T WRAP MY HEAD AROUND THE IDEA.
DOING CHORES

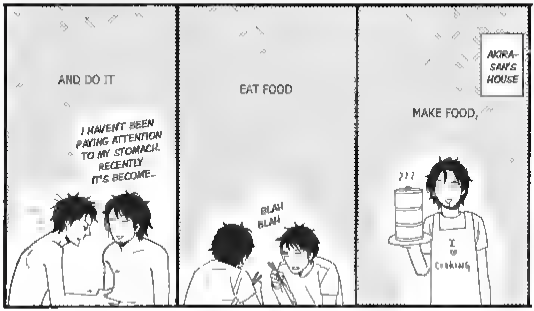

CLAST
IT'S A QUESTION THAT HAS CROSSED MY MIND.
WONDERING WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN IF YOU OR ME WAS A GIRL...
I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG THIS IS GOING TO LAST, BUT REGARDLESS OF HOW LONG, THERE WILL NEVER BE THAT KIND OF SECURITY THAT COMES WITH TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE.

IF I THINK ABOUT HOW ..

ONE DAY

AKIRA SAN MIGHT REGRET BEING WITH ME.

AND DO IT
I'M HOT I'M TURNING ON THE AC
EAT FOOD
BLAH BLAH
MY HOUSE
MAKE FOOD


AND DO IT
I HAVEN'T BEEN PAYING ATTENTION TO MY STOMACH. RECENTLY IT'S BECOME-
EAT FOOD
BLAH BLAH
AKIRA-SAN'S HOUSE
MAKE FOOD,
Cookware

SA——FE!
EXCUSE ME!
AH—!
SHHF
WHAT THE HELL KIND OF ROUTINE IS THAT?
WELL IT IS PEACEFUL THOUGH

AT THE VERY LEAST, I WANT TO BE TOGETHER WITH HIM AS LONG AS POSSIBLE
YEAH!
YOU WORK AT THE BAR, RIGHT?
WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO MAKE THIS LAST?
UHM.
SIGH
DA-TE!
WE'RE GOING TO SNEAK INTO THAT POPULAR PLACE TODAY!!
ESCAPE!
RELATIONSHIP RUTS!
POOF
NO
BASEBALL UNIFORM CATALOGUE

"YOU "
HE WAS YELLING AT ME ABOUT SOMETHING EARLIER...
WHAT WAS IT?
WHY DO I KEEP LETTING THIS GET TO ME?

KOFF
KOFF
.....
WHAT PART IS THAT?
YOU KNOW,
THERE'S A PART OF YOU THAT DOESN'T TRUST ME,

FOR SOME REASON, I FEEL LIKE YOU'RE STILL WONDERING THAT. IT'S STARTING TO PISS ME OFF.
IF I REALLY HAVE FEELINGS FOR YOU AND ALL THAT?
REMEMBER HOW YOU ASKED ME BEFORE?
SWEEP
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO HANDLE JUST ABOUT ANYTHING THAT LIFE THREW IN MY DIRECTION.
YOU SEE, EVER SINCE I WAS LITTLE...
GUESS I JUST GOT THE HANG OF THINGS.
...WHATEVER I DID, I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE I'D ACCOMPLISHED ANYTHING.
IT'S LIKE A SERIOUS COMPLEX FOR ME.
SQUEAK
GERR
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU SAYING? YOU TRYING TO PROVOKE A REACTION?
HAHA.
WHAT I MEAN IS...

FLOP
THUMP
I'D RATHER JUST DIE AND COME BACK AS SOMEONE LIKE YOU.
IT'S DIFFICULT FOR ME TO BELIEVE YOU COULD GIVE IT YOUR ALL WHEN I CAN'T EVEN DO THAT.
...THAT'S WHY I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY ANYONE LIKE YOU WOULD CARE FOR SOMEONE LIKE ME.
NAAH
2@15
...I REALLY ENVY YOU FOR NOT BEING A CYNICAL PERSON.
I'M NOT.
THAT KINDA SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE MOCKING ME.
PSSH. YOU'RE JUST BRAGGING.
HE'S SO NEGATIVE
TO-
TO-
TORIHARA-.
THUMP

DON'T SEE THAT EVERY DAY.
...YOU'RE DRUNK, AREN'T YOU?
SLAP
FIST
TAK
CAN'T BREATHE...
THIS GIRL I ONCE DATED SAID SOMETHING TO ME.
IT WAS SUCH A KICKASS LINE, WORTHY OF A PROFESSIONAL PLAYA.
LISTEN UP MAN.
FWOOP
FOOMP
HAVE YOU EVER DATED A VIRGIN?
!
AH.
WHISH
...WHAT, YOU THINK THIS IS SOME PORN FLICK OR SOMETHING?!
PHHFT
"MAKING LOVE TO YOU, I WAS BORN AGAIN."

SHE REALLY DID SAY THAT TO ME.
IT IS A BIG DEAL.
SHE COULDN'T HAVE FAKED IT WITHOUT LOVE.
MAYBE IT'S NOT ANXIETY WITHOUT ANY CLEAR REASON—
NOT HAPPY WITH YOUR CHOICE OF WORDS...
OLD GEEZER.
HOW ABOUT I SUCK YOU OFF? MAYBE THAT WILL HELP YOU FEEL REBORN?
I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO THIS EITHER IF I DIDN'T LOVE YOU-.
AH!
HAHAHA!
THAT I'M FEELING—
INSTEAD IT'S PROBABLY CLOSER TO
A GUILT TRIP

LIKE I'M THINKING

AM I DOING SOMETHING WRONG BY DRAGGING HIM INTO A RELATIONSHIP THAT DOESN'T HAVE A FUTURE?

I CLEARLY CARE ABOUT HIM TOO MUCH.

I'VE TURNED INTO A BALL OF MUSH OVER YOU, YOU SEE?

AH.

UGH
---EUGH.
HUFF
HEH.
YOU'RE SORTA CUTE TODAY.
HEH.
SERIOUSLY...
.....
YOU MAKE ME WANNA JUMP YOU.
GIVING ME THE SILENT TREATMENT?
WANNA SWITCH UP BATTING POSITIONS?
YO.
I DON'T WANNA.

I CONSIDER MYSELF AN INCREDIBLY KIND AND GIVING PERSON.
OR MAYBE I'M JUST REALLY CRANKED TODAY.
GRIN
THIS ONE'S ON THE HOUSE.
HUH?
HERE I GO.
YOU'RE GONNA RIDE ME?
HUH?
WAIT A...
HAAH
NHHI
AH
!
BE...

PUT UP WITH IT!
SEX IS A SPORT!
YOU'RE HEAVY!
BEFORE I TELL YOU HOW I FEEL, MOST IMPORTANTLY YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT
THUD
HAA
HEY, UM,
DO YOU...
HAAH
...WHAT DID I SAY AFTER THAT?
IT WAS SOMETHING IMPORTANT...
BOY I'M DAY DREAMING.

MY CHEST HURTS...
MAN, YOU ALRIGHT?
WHIRL WHIRL
.....
"HEY, UM
DO YOU "

HEY, YOU.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT, RIGHT?
"TRUTH IS, IT'S FOOLISHLY SIMPLE,"
RIGHT?
HEH.
WHAT DID YOU SAY EXACTLY?
I THINK IT WAS "IF YOU LIKE SOMEONE, THEN THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH."
AH,
THAT'S RIGHT!
HAAH

THAT'S RIGHT

"TRUTH IS
IT'S FOOLISHLY
SIMPLE "

I FORGOT THE MOST
IMPORTANT THING

YOU PUT UP A GOOD EFFORT!
HEY HEY
PZAK
BAAARRF!
WANT SOME? MY HAND-MADE MEAT AND MISO ONIGIRI...
YOUR ENDURANCE RAN OUT?
BARRF!
BARF
I'M THE ONE WHO SAID IT IN THE FIRST PLACE
RIGHT
SHHF

ONLY ONE THING WILL DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT WE STAY TOGETHER.
AND THAT'S IF WE CARE FOR EACH OTHER.

DOING THINGS LIKE LINKING HANDS AND GOING TO AMUSEMENT PARKS.
WOW
JUST THINKING ABOUT IT MAKES ME WANNA PUKE.

I MUST'VE GONE MAD 'CAUSE I'M TOO CRAZY ABOUT HIM
US DATING...
THE IDEA MAKES ME LAUGH.
HUH?
PLOP

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT...
HE HIT IT!
LOOKS LIKE HE'S GONNA MAKE IT TO SECOND!
CLANG

WE REEKED OF ALCOHOL SO MUCH THAT THEY WOULDN'T LET US IN TO SEE THE DOLPHIN SHOW.
ROLL
ONE DAY WE HAD BEEN DRINKING SINCE EARLY IN THE AFTERNOON. WE WENT TO THE AQUARIUM.
WE WENT AROUND SAYING THINGS LIKE "I COULD EAT THAT" AND "THAT'S TASTY." WE GOT DIRTY LOOKS FROM A GROUP OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL KIDS.
RUN-T

TAP
!
JUST GO BACK TO SLEEP.
WHAT?

TO THINK THAT SPENDING TIME LIKE THIS IS FUN...!
IT IS FOOLISHLY SIMPLE.

I CARE FOR HIM,

IN ITSELF, THAT IS ENOUGH.
AND ADORE HIM EVEN MORE. THERE'S NOTHING FOR IT.
...AKIRA-SAN.
PITCHER, SWEETHEART? ...
GO HOME~
I'VE TURNED INTO A BALL OF MUSH OVER YOU,
I REALLY HAVE.
YOUR HAT SMELLS LIKE SHIT.
BARF

Tomoko Yamashita

Dining Bar Akira

HE'S MY "FRIEND," AND I LIKE HIM
HE'S MY POLAR OPPOSITE COMPLETELY SERIOUS AND DEDICATED
THEY'RE SAYIN' THE SUBSTITUTE TEACHER FOR MAEDA-SENSEI'S MATERNITY LEAVE IS COMING TO CLASS TODAY.
...ARE YOU LISTENING?
WAKE UP
...TO THINK THAT I WOULD ONLY BE ABLE TO LIKE GUYS...
WHY WASN'T I BORN AS A WOMAN?
IT'S A MIRACLE WE EVEN BECAME FRIENDS.
UH-HUH.
YEAH.

I THINK MY CONTACTS ARE GONNA FALL OUT.
CRAP, WHAT DO I DO?
SO DON'T START LIKING ME
LET ME CONTINUE LIKING YOU. JUST ME LIKING YOU.
Dishevel
FOGGY SCENE

STARTING TODAY, YOUR CLASS WILL HAVE A SUBSTITUTE TEACHER WHILE MAEDA-SENSEI IS ON MATERNITY LEAVE.
EVERYONE, HAVE A SEAT. TIME FOR THE MORNING BOW.
I SLEPT TOO MUCH.
DRRRK
SHHF
ISAI-SENSEI,
NOW, IF YOU WOULD GIVE THE STUDENTS A BRIEF INTRODUCTION...
"... HOW OLD ARE YOU? ARE YOU SPOKEN FOR?"

SIGH...
I'LL ONLY BE WITH YOU FOR A SHORT WHILE, BUT I HOPE WE CAN MAKE THE BEST OF OUR TIME TOGETHER
...I'M ISAI. THIS SCHOOL IS MY ALMA MATER, AND I TEACH ENGLISH.
SO (A LIE) IF I WAS SPOKEN FOR I WOULDN'T COME TO A PLACE LIKE THIS
ADULTS ARE...
HE JUST LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE I KNOW.
NOTHING.
HMM?
WHAT'S WRONG?
YOU'RE ACTING ALL WEIRD
A GUY I FELL IN LOVE WITH FOR A NIGHT...
OF COURSE, HE'S GOOD-LOOKING EVEN IN BROAD DAY LIGHT
GOOD AT KEEPING THEIR COOL.

I'M TURNING 17 SOON...
THAT'S NOT THE ISSUE HERE.
JEEZ.
...ISAI-SAN, YOU KNOW...
I'M "SENSEI" TO YOU, YOU DAMN PUNK.
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OFFICE
SEAT IN
THIS IS HORRIBLE!
YOU'RE 16?
MAKE SURE TO CHECK THE LOCK WHEN YOU LEAVE
...SENSEI,
YOU WANNA DATE ME?
WHAT?!

TAP
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS! HOW THIS IS PLAYING OUT IS PISSING ME OFF!
I DON'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING THAT WOULD TIP PEOPLE OFF.
BAM
YOU'RE SO COLD!!!
DON'T YOU THINK YOU'VE BEEN A BIT CRUEL RIGHT FROM THE GET-GO?!
...ALRIGHT, SO THEN HIT ON ME AGAIN.
NO!!
FLAT OUT
TAK
MAKE SURE TO CHECK THE LOCK WHEN YOU LEAVE!
AT ANY RATE, I'M NOT BEING CRUEL. THAT DAY WAS A SPECIAL EXCEPTION.
PEOPLE NATURALLY HIT ON THE ONES THEY LIKE BY BEING SWEET, RIGHT?
I MEAN, WE WERE AT A GAY BAR, AFTER ALL.
THMP
YOU SEEM LIKE YOU'RE CAPABLE OF UNDERSTANDING THINGS,
YOU REALLY ARE CRUEL.
SO I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU A CLEAR "NO."
KEH KEH KEH
UGH

...HOW OLD ARE YOU?
NOW?
31.
WE'RE OVER A DECADE APART.
HEH...
I'M NOT THAT YOUNG ANYMORE.
FOR EXAMPLE, I BELIEVE IT RISKY TO FEEL FOR ONE PERSON TOO STRONGLY. ALSO, I FIND IT CHILDISH TO PLAY GAMES FOR FUN.
SMACK
YATSUE TO...
YATSUE.
I'LL REMEMBER IT NOW.
...SENSEI...
DID YOU EVEN LIKE ME AT LEAST A LITTLE?
HIGH.
THAT'S, WELL...
IF I DIDN'T LIKE YOU, I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO BE WITH YOU.
WHAT WAS YOUR NAME? SOMETHIN' TORU...

!
LUBDUB
I'M FINE WITH GIVING YOU A KISS
TO KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT.
BUT HEY, THAT TIME...
...DIDN'T YOU SAY THERE WAS SOME GUY YOU REALLY, REALLY LIKED?
"THERE'S SOMEONE I LIKE BUT IT'LL NEVER WORK OUT."
I'LL PLAY JUST A LITTLE.
HMPH
I, I THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T GOING TO PLAY AROUND!
.....
I DON'T WANT HIM TO FIND OUT THOUGH
...NO. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
KISS ME.

IT'S A SECRET FROM THE "FRIEND" I LIKE THE MOST
ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING
KUN♡
SHI
KA
TA
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO WAIT FOR ME.
UH...
YEAH.
CLIK
UHM...
WHAM

SHOULD WE HEAD HOME?
THUMP
ONE-SIDED LOVE
...YEAH.
FEELS LIKE A SWEET AND PAINFUL ITCHING LIKE A WOUND THAT NEVER HEALS

...AND SO,
I DON'T THINK THEY COULD POSSIBLY EXIST.
WHY DID I START HAVING FEELINGS FOR THIS GUY?
HAHA.
THERE AREN'T ANY, RIGHT?
RIGHT?!

YAWN
THIS SPEECH IS GOING ON FOREVER...
I SHOULDVE KNOWN BETTER THAN TO COME TO A SCHOOL LIKE THIS
SO ANNOYING
TOYU HIGH SCHOOL INAUGURAL ANNIVERSARY
AND THEIR
.....
...HEY, FUNO-KUN,
YOU A STAND-UP KINDA GUY?
HUH??
FUMCH
THUTHUMP
YOUR GLASSES JUST SCREAM MODESTY AND DEDICATION

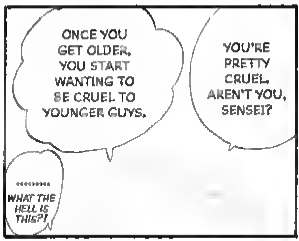
WHAT, SOMETHING WRONG WITH SAYING THAT?
WHAT HAVE MY GLASSES GOT TO DO WITH IT?
...NOPE! NOTHING'S WRONG AT ALL!
SHUT UP!
THAT'S WHY I CAN'T TELL YOU ANYTHING
NOT A WORD
THE BEGINNINGS OF LOVE ARE SMALL
SINCE MY LOVE FOR YOU BEGAN, MY ONLY DESIRE HAS BEEN FOR YOU NOT TO HATE ME EVEN THOUGH MY OWN FEELINGS ARE SO STRONG THEY BORDER ON YEARNING

IT'S A MIRACLE IN ITSELF THAT SOMEONE AS UNDEDICATED AS ME HAS FALLEN SO HARD FOR ANYONE AT ALL.
THAT'S WHY I CAN'T SAY IT.
I CAN'T TELL YOU THAT I WANT YOU TO TEAR INTO MY BODY
.....
I WANNA HAVE SEX.
REAL BAD.
THU
THUMP

UGH, YOU'RE ANNOYING ME.
DON'T EVEN MENTION IT AT SCHOOL.
MEET ME AFTERWARDS.
...I'M WORKING.
DON'T BOTHER ME.
I'M TERRIBLY BUSY RIGHT NOW.
GET YOUR HAND OFF ME.
WHY DON'T YOU JACK OFF?
EH?
WHY ARE YOU BEING SO MEAN ALL OF A SUDDEN?
WAHH, SENSEI, YOU'RE ONE BIG SADIST!
THUNK.
YOU'RE JUST HAPPY TO BE ABLE TO SHARE THINGS WITH SOMEONE FOR THE FIRST TIME.
MORE THAN ANYTHING, DON'T COME HERE TOO MUCH.
IT'S BETTER THAN GOING TO A GAY BAR, BUT STILL...
SKRTCH

I HAD IT EVEN WORSE. I MEAN I'M BI.
I WASN'T ABLE TO TELL KAMI-SAN.
...SHARE?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
LIKE "I'M LONELY," OR "I WANT TO DIE," OR...
WHAP
YOU MUST HAVE SOMETHING LIKE THAT, SOMETHING YOU CAN'T EVEN TELL YOUR PARENTS.
...DID YOU HAVE SOMETHING LIKE THAT TOO, SENSEI?
THUMP
HUH?
WHA...?!
KAMI-SAN?!
SENSEI, YOU WERE MARRIED?
AND YOU'RE BI?!
HA.
DIVORCED.
I REALLY CARED FOR HER, AND SO I MARRIED HER. STILL, I WASN'T ABLE TO TELL HER THE TRUTH. IN THE END, WE DIVORCED AFTER A YEAR.
THAT ONE LIE RUINED EVERYTHING.
RUFFLE

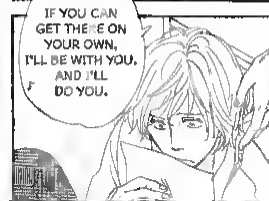
SIGH.
IDIOT.
ONE ONVORCE...
.....
I FEEL LIKE I JUST GOT MY HEART BROKEN FOR SOME REASON.


ONCE YOU GET OLDER, YOU START WANTING TO BE CRUEL TO YOUNGER GUYS.
YOU'RE PRETTY CRUEL, AREN'T YOU, SENSEI?
.....
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?!

PUSH
IF YOU REALLY WANT TO...

THIS IS MY ADDRESS.
SHIP
MEME

ON THAT DAY, SENSEI...


IF YOU CAN GET THERE ON YOUR OWN, I'LL BE WITH YOU. AND I'LL DO YOU.

WAS DIFFERENT FROM SENSEI ON THE PREVIOUS NIGHT
WHILE HAVING ME, HE FELT LIKE HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN OF TWO MINDS ABOUT KEEPING HIS DISTANCE FROM ME
SO...I REMEMBERED TAKASHI IN THAT MOMENT AND I FELT A BIT UNEASY
I IMAGINED HIM ANSWERING QUESTIONS LIKE, "IF IT WAS YOU, HOW WOULD YOU HAVE...?"
THAT KIND OF SCENARIO IS A DREAM THAT WOULD NEVER COME TRUE IN THIS LIFE, EVEN IF I WISHED FOR IT A MILLION TIMES.
THE GUY YOU SAY YOU LIKE, IS HE STRAIGHT?
FWIP

PUNCH!
THWA
WOW, YOU REALLY ARE AN IDIOT.
THAT'S SOMETHING SURE TO TRAUMATIZE YOU OVER AND OVER.
HAHA!
YEAH.
HE'S MY FRIEND.
IF I'M FEELING THIS MUCH AGONY FROM HAVING THE MAN I LIKE SECOND-BEST TREAT ME THIS WAY...
I THINK I WOULD BREAK IF *YOU* EVER DID THIS TO ME

RESPOND TO MY TEXTS!
PLOP
STMP
STMP
...TAKASHI.
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE BEEN IN A BAD MOOD RECENTLY.
...ON TOP OF THAT,
SOMETHING ABOUT THE WAY YOU'VE BEEN ACTING LATELY SAYS THERE'S SOMETHING YOU'VE BEEN HIDING FROM ME.
IT'S NOT MY MOOD. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S BEEN AVOIDING ME.
HIDING SOMETHING FROM YOU?
ME?
HUH?
IT'S YOUR FAULT, TORU. YOU DON'T HANG OUT WITH ME MUCH!
DO YOU HAVE A GIRLFRIEND?
N-
NO! OF COURSE NOT!

HEY! THAT'S NOT...!
I CAN'T TELL YOU ANYTHING ESPECIALLY WHEN...
YOU AND I AREN'T THE SAME KIND OF PEOPLE.
NOW, WAIT JUST A SECOND. IT'S 'CAUSE YOU'RE TOO DAMN DEDICATED.
THAT'S... YOU'RE THINKING TOO MUCH!
THAT'S ONLY NATURAL.
I DON'T THINK YOU EVEN GET ME.
YOU'RE NOT REALLY SEEING ME THE WAY I AM. WHEN YOU LOOK AT ME, YOU'RE SEEING SOME IDEAL YOU'VE CREATED.
YOU ALWAYS TALK ABOUT HOW DEDICATED I AM, BUT I'M NOWHERE NEAR AS DEDICATED AS YOU THINK.
I HAVE FEELINGS FOR YOU
WE'RE FRIENDS,
BUT IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE IT.

I CARE FOR YOU.
YOU ARE MY FRIEND, TAKASHI.
YOU'RE THE MOST IMPORTANT FRIEND.
I CARE FOR YOU
THE TRUTH IS THAT I LIKE ALL THOSE THINGS ABOUT YOU.
REALLY
— HOW YOU'RE SO SURPRISINGLY INNOCENT WHEN YOU TALK.
HOW YOU CAN TACKLE ANYTHING WITH DEDICATION, UNLIKE ME
I LOVE HOW
FOR SOMEONE WHO'S ALWAYS SO QUIET YOU'RE STILL A HOTHEAD
— HOW YOU RE STUBBORN
Sensei where are you right now?
...I CARE SO MUCH FOR YOU.

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
WHOA
...WHAT IS IT?
YOU'RE ALL OUT OF BREATH.
HUFF
...SENSEI!

SENSEI... ACTUALLY, CAN I CALL YOU SENPAI?
YOU KNOW HOW YOU SAID LAST TIME THAT YOU WOULDN'T PLAY GAMES?

THEN, TAKE ME SERIOUSLY AS YOUR LOVER, SENPAI.

HA
SUCH AN ABSURD THING...

YOU MAY BE MY KŌHAI, BUT IF YOU TRY TO USE THAT TO YOUR ADVANTAGE, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE SOME PROBLEMS.
WOULD ONLY MAKE ME THE FOOL IF THINGS BECAME SERIOUS.
SWIPP
...BUT I...
...IF YOU LOVED ME, I COULD LEARN TO LOVE YOU.
FALTER
WHA...
YOU DID SAY SO, DIDN'T YOU?
I'M NOT THE ONE YOU REALLY FEEL FOR.
...I WANNA LOVE SOMEONE WHO LOVES ME.

...IT WON'T WORK WITH YOU.
IF I'M FEELING THIS MUCH AGONY FROM HAVING THE MAN I LIKE SECOND-BEST TREAT ME THIS WAY...

AH...
I'M SURE I WOULD DIE IF YOU EVER HATED ME.
THE CONTACT IN MY RIGHT EYE VANISHED
NOT THE EXPRESSION ON SENSEI'S FACE,
BECAUSE I WAS CONCENTRATING ON THE CONTACT THAT HAD FALLEN OUT—
I ACTUALLY COULDN'T SEE ANYTHING

AND DEFINITELY
NOT THE WAY
YOU LOOKED
WHEN YOU HAD
FOLLOWED ME

REEL
LUBDUB
TAKASHI!
TAKA--!
IN FRONT OF MY EYES,
THERE WAS A THICK FOG I COULDN'T SEE THROUGH.
TA--
WHY?!
YOU KNOW MY EYE SIGHT IS ACTUALLY WORSE THAN YOURS

DID HE HEAR OUR CONVERSATION?
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY ANYTHING TO ME?!
I WANT HIM TO FIND OUT. I DON'T WANT HIM TO FIND OUT.
I WISH HE DID
I WISH HE DIDN'T
...I DON'T KNOW.
WHY ARE YOU CRYING?
IS IT OVER SOMETHING YOU CAN'T TELL ME?

THERE'S NO WAY I'D BE ABLE TO SAY IT
I DON'T WANT YOU TO HATE ME
I...
I CARE FOR YOU
IN A WAY THAT'S DIFFERENT FROM HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT ME

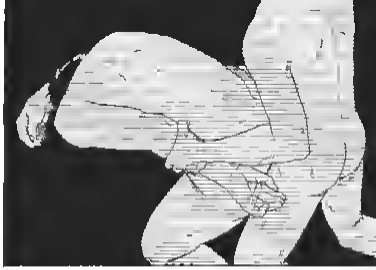
I...
IN THE CORNER OF MY RIGHT EYE I CAN SEE THE CONTACT THAT HAS SHIFTED OUT OF PLACE
IN MY LEFT EYE, STANDS THE ONLY CLEAR VIEW
AS WELL AS MY LOVE WHO I CAN NEVER HAVE IN THIS LIFE.

Tomoko Yamashita

Dining Bar Akira

RIVERSIDE MOONLIGHT

I'M GAY
EVEN THOUGH I'M 27, I JUST HAD A WET DREAM
I THOUGHT I WAS ONLY INTO GOOD-LOOKING GUYS, BUT THEN I JUST HAD A WET DREAM ABOUT THAT OTHER GUY


KAWABE SAN
FROM WORK
IN THE DREAM
I WAS PLOWING HIM
LIKE CRAZY

OH, YOU
HERE?
GOOD MORNING,
KAWABE-SAN.
YIKES

GOOD MORNING, MINAMIDA-KUN?
WHAT?
.....
CAN'T BELIEVE MY DREAM WAS ABOUT KAWABE-SAN... HOW COULD IT HAVE BEEN HIM?!
HEY!
HEY!
HEY
CAN'T BELIEVE I HAD THAT KIND OF DREAM ABOUT KAWABE-SAN, I...
HEY!
HEY!
...WHAT?
YOU'RE FRIGHTENING ME.
NO, I...
UM...
...KAWABE-SAN.
AAH-----!
MINAMIDA!
YOU DOZING OFF?

I'M GONNA FREAKIN' MURDER YOU.
HM?
REALIZATION
WHAT?
KAWABE-SAN, YOU'RE CUTE LIKE A TEDDY BEAR.
...AH, HEY~
YOU'RE SCARY MINAMIDA...
FANTASY
...NOTHIN'
THUMP
YOU'RE WEIRD TODAY!
THE HELL'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?
I'M DIETING, YOU KNOW?
I'M ALREADY CONSCIENTIOUS ABOUT MY WEIGHT!
FREAKIN' MURDER...
IS ALL THIS LUST FROM DEEP IN MY SUBCONSCIOUSNESS?
THAT KINDA...
THIS KINDA

HMM? YEAH.
FIDGETY
FIDGETY
WHAT?
NO WAY!
DID YOU KNOW THAT WE'RE ONLY THREE YEARS APART?
KAWABE-SAN, YOU TURNED 30 THIS YEAR, RIGHT?
"THAT'S THE WORST?"
FWOOSH
WOOSH
GUK
GUK
GUK
WOH!
KUGA
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS. REALLY--?
THAT'S THE WORST--.
WHOA!
YOU'RE LYING!
HOLY--!
WHAT. WHAT'S GOING ON?!
FUNG
ACK--! HEY! I, UM...!

THAT'S WHAT HE SAID
AM I GOING TO
SHARE HIS FATE?
IS THIS SOME PROCESS THAT
EVERYONE GOES THROUGH?
DOES LOVE ALSO COME TO
A GAY GUY WHO WORKS
AT A PRINTING COMPANY,
AND WHO HAD NO CHOICE
BUT TO GIVE UP DREAMS
OF A STABLE FAMILY LIFE?
OH, SHALL I CALL
KAWABE-SAN
MY ANGEL?
KAWABE-SAN...

I'VE SOWN
MY WILD OATS.
NOW, I JUST WANT
TO SETTLE DOWN
WITH THIS GIRL
RIGHT HERE.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?
I'M FEELING THIS WAY OVER
THAT PATHETIC KAWABE-SAN
WHY AM I LIKE THIS?
HE'S REALLY 30, BUT LOOKS
LIKE HE'S 35 AND HE'S
A MIDDLE-AGED MAN WHO
NARROWLY WANDERS
THE LINE BETWEEN
"CHUBBY" AND "PORKY"

HMM .. BUT THEN AGAIN,
I REMEMBER MEETING
MY CLASSMATE FROM
MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR
THE FIRST TIME IN
FOREVER. HE WAS WITH
THIS BUTT UGLY GIRL THAT
MADE ME THINK "WHY?"

UM...

WHY ARE
YOU HARD?

WHAT...

NO!

NO! NO!
THAT'S
NOT IT.

THEN
WHAT
THE HELL
IS IT?

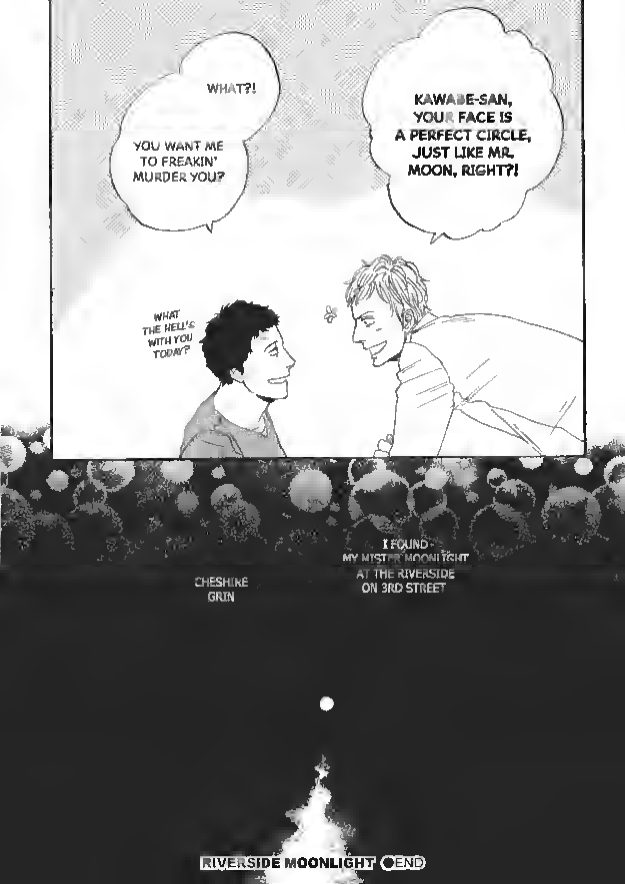
LUB
DUB

...STOP IT.
DON'T PULL
THAT KINDA
DIRTY JOKE
ON ME.

WHA...?!

WHAT'S WITH
THAT BOXING
POSE?

...THE HELL?
TODAY, YOU'RE A LITTLE...
AHAHA.
BY THE WAY, I'M HOT, RIGHT?
YEAH.
YOU BROKE UP WITH HER RECENTLY OR SOMETHING?
KAWABE-SAN, YOU DON'T HAVE A GIRLFRIEND, RIGHT?
DO YOU LIKE SEX?
YOU'RE TOO CLOSE
.....
NOT MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE...
I THINK
ALTHOUGH... MY DESIRE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN DECREASING LATELY.
WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON?
YOU'RE PISSING ME OFF!
.....
YOU'RE DECENT. BUT...
I SEE.
I'M GOOD AT IT THOUGH-♡
GAIN


WHAT?!
YOU WANT ME TO FREAKIN' MURDER YOU?
KAWABE-SAN, YOUR FACE IS A PERFECT CIRCLE, JUST LIKE MR. MOON, RIGHT?!
WHAT THE HELL'S WITH YOU TODAY?
CHESHIRE GRIN
I FOUND MY MYSTIC MOONLIGHT AT THE RIVERSIDE ON 3RD STREET
RIVERSIDE MOONLIGHT END

DIARY OF A MANAGER

DINING BAR AKIRA SIDE MENU

OKUDA MASARU (24) DOESN'T TALK MUCH ABOUT HIMSELF

..NOTHIN' IN PARTICULAR.

HE FREQUENTLY GOES TO INDIA.

I WENT TO INDIA.

HMM?

WHAT FOR?

APPARENTLY HE LIKES INDIA

HERE'S YOUR SOUVENIR.

OKUDA LOUNGES ABOUT IN VARIOUS SPOTS IN THE RESTAURANT SO, SOMETIMES NO ONE KNOWS WHERE HE IS

WHERE'S OKUDA?!

HERE!

YIKES

HE SAYS RANDOM THINGS LIKE THAT BUT OF THE BLUE HE'S A BIT WEIRD

TAKAKO-CHAN TENDS TO BE FRIGHTENED BY HIM

...AH!

EEK

APPARENTLY SOCCER IS HIS HOBBY, BUT I REALLY CAN'T IMAGINE HIM BEING ABLE TO RUN FAST

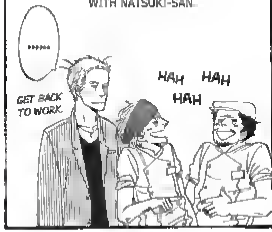
HIS FAVORITE PLAYER IS MAKÉLÉLÉ

HE'S A DEFENDER.

HE'S SKINNY

ERIKAWA KOU (22) IS A GOOD WORKER, BUT HE'S THOUGHTLESS IN EVERY WAY

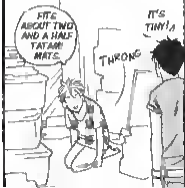
HE'S ALWAYS DOING LITTLE COMIC SKITS WITH NATSUKI-SAN.



HE'S NEVER BEEN SERIOUS

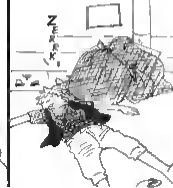
THIS TIME, I'M BEING SERIOUS!!

ALSO, HIS PLACE IS SUPPOSED TO BE SO SMALL. IT'S A WONDER TO BEHOLD



OR SHOW UP FOR WORK COMPLETELY INTOXICATED

WHEN HE GETS WASTED, HE'LL PASS OUT ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD...



MATSUKI DAI (35) IS GOOD AT FIGHTING

I'M TOLD HE CRIED BECAUSE OF PAIN FROM USING THE BLEACH

WHY DON'T WE JUST FORGET THIS WHOLE "GOING BLOND" IDEA?

HE'S DOESN'T LOSE MUCH, SO HE'S STILL UNACCUSTOMED TO PAIN

HAHAHA

I DON'T WANNA

EVEN AFTER BECOMING AN ADULT I'VE SEEN HIM GET CARRIED OFF BY THE POLICE MULTIPLE TIMES

IT WAS LEGITIMATE SELF-DEFENSE!

UM...

ACTING LIKE THEY DON'T KNOW HIM.

MAKI SAN OFTEN TAKES CARE OF HIM.

THEN, COME CLEAN FOR ME.

I SPILLED THINNER IN MY ROOM... LET ME PLEASE SLEEP AT YOUR PLACE.

NO WAY.

YOU GUYS SERIOUSLY GET ALONG"!

.....

IT STINKS SO MUCH, I CAN'T GO TO SLEEP THERE.

HE'S FUNDAMENTALLY A VERY CARELESS PERSON

COLLECTING PLASTIC MODELS IS HIS HOBBY

T-34/85

HE LIKES TANKS.

GOTO TAKAKO (22) IS
THE LONE FLOWER IN OUR GROUP

SHE'S EXTREMELY
SHY AND OFTEN QUIET

I JUST GOT
A HAIR CUT. SEE?
IT'S JUST ME.

COME HERE~.

THERE'S
SOMEONE
HERE THAT
I DON'T
KNOW

I WANNA
GET TOGETHER
WITH FEMALE
CO-WORKERS
AND GOSSIP ABOUT
THE OWNER!

SHE CLEARLY
WANTS US TO
INCREASE
THE NUMBER
OF FEMALE
EMPLOYEES

I WONDER
WHAT KINDA
DIRT THEY
WOULD DISH?

HIRE
SOME
GIRLS!

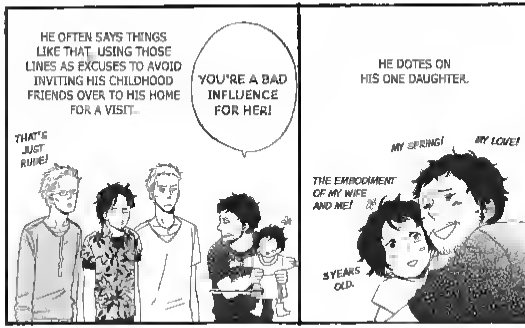
THERE AREN'T
ANY GUYS
LIKE THAT

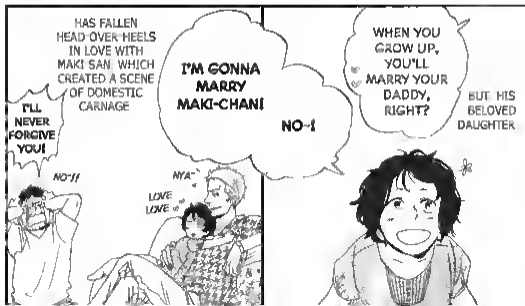
SHE LIKES
GUYS LIKE JACK
NICHOLSON.

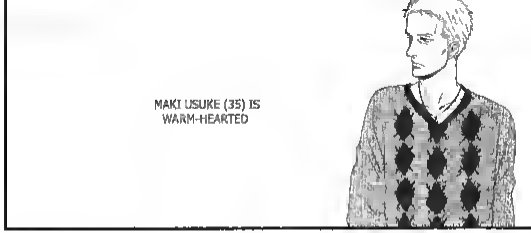
SHE'S INTO HARLEYS
SINCE MATSUKI LIKES TANKS
SOMETIMES THE TWO OF THEM
MAKE A RACKET TALKING ABOUT
TIRES AND ENGINES.

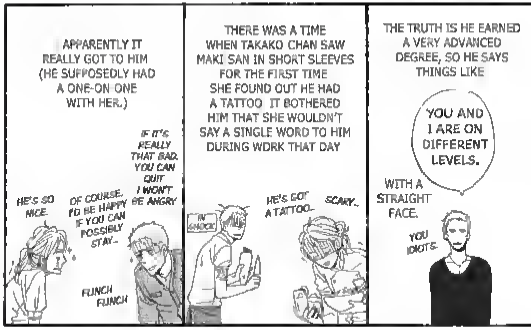
SHE LIKES
BIG WHEELS.

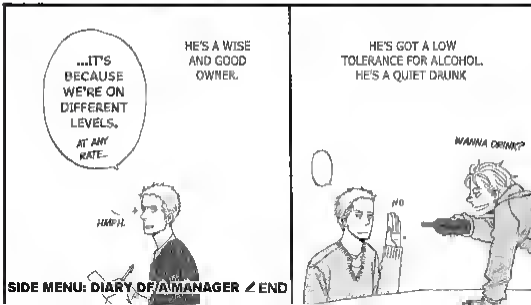
MITSUMOTO NATSUKI (35) IS
A FAMILY ORIENTED PERSON


HE OFTEN SAYS THINGS LIKE THAT, USING THOSE LINES AS EXCUSES TO AVOID INVITING HIS CHILDHOOD FRIENDS OVER TO HIS HOME FOR A VISIT...
YOU'RE A BAD INFLUENCE FOR HER!
THAT'S JUST RUDE!
HE DOTES ON HIS ONE DAUGHTER.
MY SPRING!
MY LOVE!
THE EMBODIMENT OF MY WIFE AND ME!
5 YEARS OLD.


HAS FALLEN HEAD OVER HEELS IN LOVE WITH MAKI SAN, WHICH CREATED A SCENE OF DOMESTIC CARNAGE
I'LL NEVER FORGIVE YOU!
I'M GONNA MARRY MAKI-CHAN!
NO-!
NO-!!
NYA-
LOVE LOVE
WHEN YOU GROW UP, YOU'LL MARRY YOUR DADDY, RIGHT?
BUT HIS BELOVED DAUGHTER




APPARENTLY IT REALLY GOT TO HIM (HE SUPPOSEDLY HAD A ONE-ON-ONE WITH HER.)
HE'S SO NICE.
OF COURSE, I'D BE HAPPY IF YOU CAN POSSIBLY STAY...
IF IT'S REALLY THAT BAD, YOU CAN QUIT I WON'T BE ANGRY
FLINCH FLINCH
THERE WAS A TIME WHEN TAKAKO CHAN SAW MAKI SAN IN SHORT SLEEVES FOR THE FIRST TIME SHE FOUND OUT HE HAD A TATTOO IT BOTHERED HIM THAT SHE WOULDN'T SAY A SINGLE WORD TO HIM DURING WORK THAT DAY
IN SHOCK
HE'S GOT A TATTOO...
SCARY...
THE TRUTH IS HE EARNED A VERY ADVANCED DEGREE, SO HE SAYS THINGS LIKE
YOU AND I ARE ON DIFFERENT LEVELS.
WITH A STRAIGHT FACE.
YOU IDIOT!


...IT'S BECAUSE WE'RE ON DIFFERENT LEVELS.
AT ANY RATE...
HMPH.
HE'S A WISE AND GOOD OWNER.
HE'S GOT A LOW TOLERANCE FOR ALCOHOL. HE'S A QUIET DRUNK
WANNA DRINK?
NO

SIDE MENU: DIARY OF A MANAGER ⁄ END